

Free men's Champion.



PRAIRIE CITY, K. T., FEB. 18, 1858.

The Great Principle.

What heart possessing one spark of patriotism, will not thrill with pleasure upon perusing the speech of Gen. LANE, recently delivered at Lawrence in reply to Buchanan's Lecompton Message? The sentiments there expressed will meet with a hearty response in the bosom of every devoted adherent to the Free State cause. The speech is a complete quintessence of the heart and soul of LANE, embracing, as it does, all of his spirit, fire, energy, earnestness and sincerity. *The hearts of the people of Kansas beat in unison with Gen. Lane's.* The demagogues, office seekers, spoils-grabbers and mock leaders, will have ample evidence of this fact. Upon the passage of the Lecompton bastard, let Gen. LANE muster his forces to resist its enforcement, and six thousand freemen, firmly resolved on "Liberty or Death!" will rally at once around him, and under his lead will immediately drive every vestige of the bastard's office-holders, sustainers, and their concomitants into the purlieus of Slavery's polluting regions.

The people have an ineffable hostility against the Lecompton bastard. They have just reasons for it. The principle involved in that question is of a nature more infringing upon the rights of people than that of any other one ever yet considered by the American people. For nearly four years have the people of this Territory endeavored to enjoy the rights and test the principle of "popular sovereignty." None who are guilty of entertaining and cherishing such sentiments as imbued the minds of our fathers of '76, have been privileged to enjoy this liberty. The propagators, advocates and tools of the slave oligarchy, have had the sole enjoyment of this right—none others.—The same power that has held the people of Kansas in subjugation for the past three years is now endeavoring to further its work of tyranny by thrusting upon them, contrary to their emphatic and manifest will, an obnoxious government that will make their condition of even a more abject nature than their long-experienced one. Contrary to all sense of honor, manliness, duty, and of moral, legal and political rights, that power, whom the nation once revered and regarded with pride—the *National Administration*—is pushing on the work of enslaving a free people. Not only is it doing this, but it is also deriding the principles of Republicanism and spitting upon the well-harped dogma of "squatter sovereignty." The harried people of Kansas wish to know where the matter will end if the Lecompton bastard, upon its acceptance by Congress, is suffered to escape a merited rebuke. They contend that if the slave power meets with such success in this instance it will immediately be tempted and encouraged to further extend its area, and soon the acme of their desires, that of the serfdom of white people, will have been attained. No matter how soon the people of Kansas may wrest themselves from the bastard's clutches, should they suffer it to be fastened upon them, they do not wish to degrade themselves by exhibiting to the world the humiliating spectacle of *American Freemen* quietly succumbing to inroads upon their liberties by tyrants.

While we know that the great heart of the Free State party beats righteously, we would warn the people to beware of spoils-seeking demagogues. An energetic effort will be made by old shrivelled political hacks and their mercenary tools, under the guise and howls of "conservatism," to bow in humble subjection to the bastard, like all serfs to their masters, for the purpose of shrinking from the responsibility of war, and also for the more speedy securing of office. Friends of Freedom, Principle and Right, beware of false leaders! Be watchful, suspicious, vigilant!

Our thanks are due Mr. E. P. Hanna, of the Lawrence Republic, for favors shown this office.

Revealed Democracy, &c.

The Commissioners appointed by the Territorial Legislature to ferret out election frauds are still briskly at work, and are daily meeting with success. One day last week Deputy Marshall E. S. WILLETT, accompanied by "Preacher STEWART" and "Constable WALKER," undertook to subpoena some witnesses near Olathe, Johnson County, to give testimony in a fraud case, but were met with resistance, and that of too strong a nature for them to cope with. Marshal WILLETT returned to Lawrence and received a dispatch from Col. ABBOTT, of the Commissioners' Court, directed to Capt. WILLETT, of this place, ordering him to proceed to Olathe with his company—the Prairie City Guards—and assist the Marshal to arrest the witnesses, and escort them to Lawrence. Capt. WILLETT received the order, and on Thursday morning the Prairie City Guards pushed out for the designated place. They were out most of the time during four of the stormiest and coldest days we have experienced this season, and succeeded in arresting five men, whom they took to Lawrence, in compliance with orders. From one of the arrested men, the commissioners gleaned the testimony that he was one of the clerks of the election held at Shawneetown, where about one hundred and sixty legal votes were polled, and that on the day succeeding that of the election the poll-books were taken to Westport, where was added nearly eight hundred more natives. Were we not accustomed to this manner of doing business we would hold up our hands in pious horror; but now nothing would induce us to do anything of the latter kind but the experience of one fair election.

We would here take occasion to speak a favorable word for the Prairie City Guards. This company is comprised of thirty of as brave, patriotic and enthusiastic young men as can be found in Kansas Territory; ever ready to respond to the call for aid in any quarter where the services of fighting men are required to maintain the rights of freemen. On five or six occasions during the present winter have they volunteered their services gratuitously to the Free State forces in the field, and under the charge of their gallant commander—Capt. O. P. WILLETT—have won and maintained a good reputation—one worthy of the place of their residence. As a citizen of Prairie City, we feel proud of our chivalric "boys."

Can't Give the Subject Justice.

The crowded state of our columns prevents us from publishing the message of Mr. BUCHANAN on the reception of the Lecompton bastard. On our first page will be found the comments of the *N. Y. Tribune* upon it, which gives it an appropriate scoring. Our position on the subject may be likened to a certain man we heard of once, who used to frequently indulge in interjections not entirely consistent with the conduct of pious people, particularly on occasions when his temper was a little irritated. One time he had occasion to ascend a hill with a burdensome load, drawn by several oxen, and after a great deal of goading, gadding, halloing and swearing, succeeded in nearly reaching the top, when, as luck would have it, crash! went one of the wagon wheels and to the mother earth was precipitated the old man's load.—Now nothing short of a shower of oaths was expected from him, but contrary to anticipation, he coolly surveyed the wreck for a moment and then burst into a hearty laugh!

"Why, Uncle Zeke," why don't you answer?"
"Oh! ho, ho, ho, hahs!"—replied Uncle Zeke, "it's no use—I can't give justice to the subject!"
It is useless for us to attempt making any comments upon this wicked production of the hoary-headed tool of the slave oligarchy. Webster has failed to furnish us with enough antithetical and vituperative terms to do justice to the subject, according to our satisfaction.

Judge Curtis, member of the Territorial Legislature, and a prominent Free State man, died at Lawrence last Tuesday. His remains passed through this place on their way to Peoria City, the residence of his family, on Wed. today.

GENERAL LANE'S SPEECH

At Lawrence, Feb. 13, 1858, in answer to the President's Message.

A mass meeting of the people of Kansas was held in the hall of the House of Representatives in Lawrence, on Saturday, Feb. 13, 1858.

The meeting was called to order by Judge Conway, and permanently organized by electing the following officers:

President—Hon. Henry J. Adams, of Leavenworth.

Secretaries—A. D. Richardson, of Quindaro, Sam. F. Tappan, of Lawrence.

Mr. Stratton, of Doniphan, moved that Gen. LANE be invited to address the meeting upon the recent message of the President to Congress, concerning Kansas affairs.

Gen. J. H. Lane accordingly took the stand, and spoke as follows:

FELLOW CITIZENS: With your permission, I will occupy a few moments of your valuable time in noticing the Special Message of the President of the United States, transmitting the Lecompton Constitution to the Senate. No one regrets the necessity for such a notice more than myself, but an official paper, emanating from the Representative of the Government, is presumed to be correct, at least in its recitation of facts. But whether proceeding from ignorance or malice, I venture the assertion that the Message stands without a parallel in its falsification of history. [Applause.]

A VOICE—That's so!

Gen. LANE—I hope to demonstrate that it contains an unmanly assault upon a patriotic, patient and peace-loving people. It is known to you, and it is a matter of history, that there never has been in Kansas any organization, public or secret, armed or unarmed, against the General Government, the Territorial Government, or the Missouri-acted code.

At the great Delegate Convention held at Big Springs in September, 1855, it was unanimously resolved, after full discussion and deliberation, not to organize in resistance to that code, but to leave each member of the Free State party free to act independently in that regard. Never has there been a moment in our history when writs could not be freely served in Lawrence or elsewhere in the Territory. Towards that Missouri code we adopted the *let-alone* policy, neither resorting to nor resisting it; and it fell of its own weight, beneath the contempt of an indignant people. [Applause.]

While the Territorial officers appointed by the Federal Government have been regarded and watched as enemies, yet their authority has always been acknowledged, and their positions respected. Knowing, as we long have, that a collision between the people of Kansas and the Federal authorities was sought for by our enemies, both here and in the General Government, we have borne and borne as Americans were never called on to do before us.

When our Territory was occupied by four distinct armies from foreign States, laying waste the country and avowing their determination to exterminate the people of Kansas—before resisting them we called upon the Territorial authorities and the Commandant of the United States troops for protection. Not until that protection was refused, did we attack the marauders. *Never have the people of Kansas been in arms except to resist invasion from other States.*

Before the Convention at Big Springs, a meeting had been called at Lawrence, to organize the Democratic party in the Territory. In that meeting the plan was brought forward, to organize a State Government under the Enabling clause, not doubted at that time to be emphatically enunciated in the Kansas-Nebraska bill.

At Big Springs, this plan was embraced as the peaceful and legal one, in preference to organized resistance to the Territorial laws, to save the effusion of blood, and avoid those laws, instead of coming in conflict with them. The delegates were fairly elected by the settlers of Kansas. A Constitution was framed, Republican in its form—submitted as an entirety to a fair and full vote of the whole people, and ratified by them. State officers and members of the Legislature, a Representative to Congress, and two United States Senators, were elected, and the Constitution forwarded to Congress, with an humble prayer for our admission under it, as one of the Sovereign States of the Union.

Had that prayer been granted, hundreds of lives and millions of property would have been saved to the people of Kansas. Since that time we have been struggling for admission, that peace might be restored and perpetuated, and the sovereignty of the majority vindicated. [Applause.]

When we were weak, and Missouri strong, our enemies obtained possession of the Territorial Government. Although we believed that precedent and law would justify us in putting the Topeka government in motion,

and that when put in motion it legally superseded the Territorial Government. The first opportunity which occurred, we did embrace, and took possession of it.

It is known to you that, had there been a chance of success, under the fraudulent registry made by our enemies we would have contested the election of delegates to the Lecompton Convention. Your speaker returned to Kansas in disguise, at the imminent peril of his life, for the express purpose of using humble efforts to induce the people to go into the election.

The Topeka Legislature is now in session passing a code of laws, with the distinct understanding that code is not to go into effect until we are admitted into the Union, or until war is declared against us by the reception of the Lecompton Constitution.

There never has been a fair election, under the Territorial authority. Our border was invaded at every election, by organized bands from Missouri, strangers to our soil—our ballot boxes seized—and our settlers driven therefrom by force. The Territorial Militia officers were our enemies.

In view of this, at the Convention where we decided to go into the October election, it was determined that I should be authorized to organize the people for the protection of the ballot box. That organization was had. Although we could not prevent the manufacture of fictitious returns, we did keep back the armed hordes, and secured the Territorial Legislature to the people.

The right to defend one's self is held to be inalienable. The American right of suffrage is believed to be equally sacred. The organization had no other object than that indicated; and immediately after the election, the position was surrendered into the hands of the people. The only design in enrolling the names of those who refused to join the organization, was, to secure a full census of the voters, to serve as a corrective of the election returns, for the detection of frauds.

The Lawrence Charter Association was a mere squatters' movement. It was news for our people to learn from Gov. Walker, that it was the commencement of a great system. In that matter, he deserved and received the ridicule of all sensible men; and no man was more chagrined than himself, at the mistake he had made.

As I have shown, and as is known to you, the people of Kansas could not participate in the election of delegates to the Lecompton Convention, with the slightest hope of success. The registry was framed by our enemies, to defraud us. The election officers were villains of the darkest dye. The people remained at home, necessarily, and with but few exceptions, the vilest men were elected delegates to frame a Constitution. They met, and by the aid of Federal bayonets consumed their villainy; and I assert here, that but for those Federal bayonets, that crime would have been prevented by an outraged people, in a summary manner. [Applause.]

In consonance with their programme, a trick of Submission was invented, to impose upon the Congress of the United States. With the Government under that Constitution, in the hands of our enemies, we knew that Kansas would be as fully a Slave State without the Slavery clause as with it. The submission of the Slavery question was of itself a mere mockery. Leaving out of the question altogether, the principle, as asserted by our fathers, that representation and the exercise of legislative power are inseparable—the fact that the Constitution was framed by the enemies of the people, protected by the Federal bayonets, and not submitted, is deemed sufficient to justify American freemen in resorting to extreme measures to prevent its being enforced upon them as their organic law. Should Congress receive it, under the circumstances, it would be in all respects the infliction of a Constitution by a Central Government upon the people of a State contrary to their wishes, and in violation of their plainest rights. The spectacle of the Central Government forcing an unwilling people into the Union would be somewhat anomalous!

Fearing the action of a partisan Congress, elected with deep prejudices against us, under protest, and with no other object than to induce that Congress to reject the Lecompton Constitution, a portion of our people, on the 4th of January, participated in the election of State officers and members of the Legislature under it. By decisive majorities, we elected enemies to that Constitution. Frauds which would drive any other people than those of Kansas into bloodshed and civil war were perpetrated, to crush us. By years of suffering and oppression we were driven to the wall. Should Congress, by the influence of a corrupt and tyrannical Executive, receive that Constitution, and attempt by Federal authority to enforce it upon us, we are determined; and nothing is left for us but the alternative of manly resistance. [Applause.]

If we bravely fall in such a struggle, we will at least have maintained our reputation as freemen, worthy of our ancestry. If we succeed, it will be a lesson to the Central Government, that Americans

"Know their rights, and knowing them maintain."

For three years we have split upon the Missouri-acted code; and all the power of Missouri and the General Government could not enforce its provisions against our contempt! The Territorial Legislature has now repealed the obnoxious features of that code. Should Congress receive the Lecompton Constitution, by that reception they restore to life that repealed code. If in three years the Central Government could not enforce it, before its repeal, how many years will it require, to enforce it, afterwards? [Laughter.]

The Kansas-Nebraska Bill secures to the foreigner who has declared his intentions, the right to vote. The Missouri code takes that right from him and confers it upon the Indian. We have vindicated the right of the foreigner under the Nebraska Bill, by the repeal of the law. Should Congress receive the Lecompton Constitution, this law is again revived; and he who votes for that reception, endorses the doctrine.

As a speedy and peaceful mode of settling our difficulties, the people framed and ratified the Topeka Constitution. By a decisive majority that Constitution was received by the popular branch of Congress. Since that time we have had a lively hope that the Senate would ratify the action of the House. To remove all pretext, and as a sacrifice to the unfounded prejudices in the minds of the opponents to that Constitution, the first Territorial Legislature under the control of the people has passed a bill calling a Convention to frame another Constitution. The law is fair to all, and provides for submitting the Constitution to be framed, to a fair and full popular vote.

This movement is tendered in a Christian and patriotic spirit, as a compromise, for a speedy and just settlement of the Kansas question.—Why should not Congress and all parties receive it as such? Before the Lecompton Constitution can possibly pass, this Constitution will be before that body. By endorsing it at once as their action, thus recognizing the right of the people to fix the details in the settlement of their own affairs, peace is permanently secured, and the rights of the majority vindicated.—On the contrary, should Congress persist in foisting upon us a Constitution despite our will, war, devastating war, must follow. It may be extended along the line to the Atlantic coast, and the President may be compelled to look upon the fragments of a broken government. God grant that justice may prevail, and such a scene never be presented.

The people of Kansas are qualified to manage their own affairs. They have sternly opposed Missouri intervention, and would have opposed intervention from Northern States or Aid Societies as sternly.

They have originated their own policy—engineered their own cause—they have ever been loyal to the Government and true to the Union; and he who charges otherwise wrongs them, and falsifies their history.

To the charge made by the President against me personally, I have this to say: that the allegation comes with a bad grace from him, or his party. I could not have been a "turbulent" character when that party endorsed me, by thrusting upon me, by unprecedented majorities, three of the most important positions in the State of Indiana—all of which I held at one time; that of Lieutenant-Governor, Elector-at-large, and Member of Congress. That character could not have been won by me, while leading the troops under the Federal authority, in the Democratic Mexican War, when I stood upon that Mexican field, where Pierce, faintly and safely reclined. [Roars of laughter.]

It was not turbulence to my then party, that induced me to vote for the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, in obedience to the instructions of my constituents—obtained, as afterwards learned, through fraud and misrepresentation, by the vile creature, John L. Robinson, in obedience to the orders of his Bright friend. Are my earnest and energetic efforts, upon my arrival in the Territory, to build up the Democratic party in Kansas, to be used as a foundation for the charge of "turbulence," by the head of that party?

Is the fact that the Topeka movement was first brought forward in a Democratic Convention, to be used against me? Is my anxiety to participate in every election that has occurred in Kansas since I reached her border, to prejudice me?

Having on all occasions insisted upon the sacred observance of the right of property, without reference to political opinions—having treated all prisoners kindly and courteously, I am forced to the conclusion that

"The head and front of my offending" must be found in the fact that I have sternly and fearlessly vindicated the right of the people of Kansas, to frame their own laws and mould their own institutions, "in their own way." [Applause.]

The Message of Mr. Buchanan evidences that he is on the same downward road that his predecessors and the Governors of Kansas have so successfully traveled. [Laughter.]—that of acting in our affairs upon the representations of the pro-slavery flatterers of Kansas and Missouri. The

politician who does it "has already fallen." Let Buchanan howl, and Congress enact!—Kansas is free, and all the powers of the earth cannot enslave her! To-day the people of Kansas are a unit; so long as that unity is preserved, nothing can prevail against them!

New Constitutional Convention.

About the last important act done by the Territorial Legislature was the passage of an act providing for the election of delegates to a convention to frame a State Constitution. The act provides that the convention shall be composed of one hundred members, and the Territory be divided into districts and delegates apportioned to them, as follows:

Leavenworth county	13
Douglas and Johnson	13
Doniphan	8
Atchison	5
Brown	3
Nemaha	2
Marshall	1
Riley	3
Pottawatomie	2
Calhoun	2
Jefferson	4
Lykins	4
Lynn	4
Bourbon and Allen	5
Franklin	2
Anderson	3
Shawnee	6
Coffey	3
Woodson	1
Richardson	2
Breckinridge	3
Madison	1
Devis	1
Wilson and Godfrey	1
Greenwood	1
Wise	1
Dorn	1
McGee	1
Weller	1
Butler and Hunter	1
Clay and Washington	1
Dickinson	1

The election is to be held on the second Monday in March.

There can be no doubt that the Free State party are now on a track that will be acceptable to the Douglas wing of the Democratic party, and that, together with the Republican strength it is hoped, will be powerful enough to carry the measure through Congress.

As to the origin of this Convention, neither the Democratic party, National Administration, nor any other power, can object to the method. This convention cannot be said to be the representation of a factions minority, of which so much has been said against the framers of the Topeka Constitution by its enemies, and to no little advantage. On the contrary it will the more fully represent the sentiments of the people of Kansas than any previous Convention.—There are many people in Kansas who are and always have been opposed to the Topeka Constitution who are in "favor of this measure, and among these might be mentioned the names of several pro-slavery men. For one, we cheerfully approve of the movement, as we believe will all others who desire to preserve the integrity of our party.

Freemen, Beware!

Beware of unscrupulous demagogues. There are certain men in our party whom we have honored by placing at our head who have no more at heart the principles involved in the Kansas issue, than members of the Democratic party. Gold, office, power, are the great stimulants that impel them to co-operate with us in our cause, and at the first opportunity to gratify their ambition they will desert and betray us. Look sharply after them! They need watching. An effort will be made by some of them, should the Lecompton bastard receive vital sustenance, to make us the laughing stock and the subjects of stigma and reproach by the friends of liberty throughout the world. Principle is of no consideration—avarice everything—with them. They wish us to eringe, wilt and humiliate roll over on our backs, like frightened puppies to their masters, and quietly succumb to the power of the Missouri spawn. Let not the cant and sickly terms of "policy," "conservatism," "common-sense," &c., of which they harp so much, about, dampen your zeal. Let them continue their lugubrious howlings at you of "fanaticism." Scrutinize closely into the motives of these servile men who boast so loudly of their "conservative" qualities, and you will find that the secret yearnings of their hearts are for mammon and self-aggrandizement. Freemen, be on your guard!